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E. A. Chunn

*Portland State University*

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The Technological Humanity of John Dewey

by

E. A. Chunn

An undergraduate honors thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Arts

in

University Honors

and

Philosophy

Thesis Advisor

Albert R. Spencer

**Abstract:**

John Dewey's theory of inquiry, or instrumentalism, was conceived in response to certain orthodox philosophies. Dewey claims the knowledge we attain from inquiry is a tool for further inquiry. As such, philosophy is inquiry into the cultural conditions of how instruments are derived. John Dewey's philosophy as a history of technology, as well as a tool for critiquing culture, is evidenced by his theory of inquiry. He finds artificial distinctions, as instruments to inquiry, to become necessary components to experience in several philosophies. Likewise, inquiries into the conditions of education, utilizing artificial models, corrupt the full potential within experience. Such inquiries, such as recent education reformations as motivated by a culture of efficiency, becomes ever more distant from the actual conditions in schools and the pressing concerns of the students, teachers, parents. This paper argues John Dewey, as the philosopher with an unfaltering faith in the potential for growth of every person, considers control of the environment to be the human interaction within inquiry. As will be presented, *technē* is direction via instruments and *erōs* is authenticity to one's self. Therefore, the realization of conditions proper for flourishing of one and all becomes the standard of action. The purpose in Dewey's conceptualizing his theory of instrumentalism to eliminate the obstacles to inquiry present in his culture can be similarly utilized to clarify the impositions from our culture hindering the inquiry into the proper conditions for education. The product of controlling the transformation of the conditions of education with *erōs* and *technē* is the creating and imagining of democratic solutions.

### **Introduction: Dewey and the Delimitation of Dualisms**

According to Larry Hickman, the epistemology of John Dewey can be considered a theory of technology. Hickman evaluates Dewey's instrumentalism and presents it for the purpose of its effectiveness for critiquing the technological culture of today. Hickman's interpretation provides relevant insight into the connections between Dewey's theories of epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics. Dewey's theory of inquiry, via Hickman, can be utilized to examine the conditions of education in our technological culture. Education of today and the planned future train individuals for the capacity to conceive and imagine fantastic, scientific models but often without regard for why to utilize the technology.

John Dewey does not task himself with the establishment of a system of metaphysics. The reason for this being pragmatism does not find utility in a transcendent reality. In fact, such a concept, being derived from without experience, is an obstacle to inquiry. The shortcomings and misgivings Dewey finds in orthodox philosophy are exhibited in the contemporary culture of education. The isolation of rationality efficiently supports the power structure and continues it without any reconsideration of its purpose. Similarly, Ken Robinson claims this culture of education isolates and nurtures the performance and growth of the abilities most relevant to the preferred mode of intelligence, i.e. rationality.

Education reformation along the culture of efficiency can never provide the proper conditions for flourishing growth, because the highly technical and efficient model never knows when to quit. Technological solutions of this sort are aimed at conditions for furthering efficiency. Neither the individual nor its society benefits from a dominant culture of efficiency. They do not permit the power of *erōs* to flourish, because of the culturally imposed standards of efficiency at the price of plasticity. Consequently, *technē* becomes the dominant mode of inquiry

and our solutions become aimed as problems distant from the public. Dewey states:

Inquiry is the controlled or directed transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is so determinate in its constituent distinctions and relations as to convert the elements of the original situation into a unified whole.<sup>1</sup>

If inquiry is “the controlled or directed transformation” of a situation, then it is both *technē* and *erōs* that are responsible for the effort; *technē*: control of environment through skill or artifice; *erōs*: direction of the self and its passions. If we eliminate the unnecessary dualisms imposed on experience and inquiry, then *erōs* can regain its functional property.

The discussion of *technē* and *erōs* elucidates Dewey’s instrumentalism, or what Dewey claims later in his life to ought to have been called technological.<sup>2</sup> The discussion of *erōs* as desire and interest in education can be related to the hopes for social reformation. A part of the process is to collectively conceptualize both the means to an end and the end in views. The focus on STEM is valid for the world’s future, but the conversation of ‘to what end’ should also occur. Dewey thinks philosophy is useful for achieving social change. The importance of philosophy is its ability to teach persons about the way they think and engage with other minds. Philosophy conceived as: a critique of (technological) culture, philosophy as education, and philosophy as a tool for social change, the solution is formed. Philosophy is a tool for the realization of a democratic society just as the education system aims to mold citizens for participation in democracy.

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<sup>1</sup> Dewey, John. *The Complete Works of John Dewey*. Ed. Jo Ann Boydston (LW.12.108)

<sup>2</sup> Alexander, “Review of *John Dewey’s Pragmatic Technology* by Larry. A Hickman” (144).

### **Practical Problem: Organisms Cannot Flourish in Culture of Education**

Any recent attempt at amelioration of the conditions of education must operate indicates the identification of the situation as problematic. The current reforms to the education system are lost as to what ends the emphasis on technology is worthwhile. Its overwhelming focus on STEM implies more technology and technological skills are necessary to meet future demands. Robinson believes the STEM fields are “necessary but they're not sufficient. A real education has to give equal weight to the arts, the humanities, to physical education.”<sup>3</sup> Educations with due emphasis on these other disciplines investigates both the common experiences to all humans as well as the technical models for our inquiry into them. The worth in the efficiency of the STEM disciplines is lost, due to the minimizing of plasticity.

Sir Ken Robinson states the “three principles on which human life flourishes ... are contradicted by the culture of education under which most teachers have to labor and most students have to endure.”<sup>4</sup> The first principle is “human beings are naturally different and diverse.”<sup>5</sup> This principle is rejected by education in favor of a standard of conformity. The emphasis on STEM disciplines and standardized testing creates a focus on high performance in a narrow scope of intelligence. The second principle “that drives human life flourishing is curiosity”. He finds compliance to be the standard in this sense. The third principle is “that human life is inherently creative.”<sup>6</sup> Robinson defines creativity as “the process of having original ideas that have value”.<sup>7</sup> Instead of a system nurturing creativity, “what we have is a culture of standardization.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Robinson, *How to Escape Education's Death Valley*. (4:47).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. (3:15).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. (3:29).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. (9:46).

<sup>7</sup> Robinson, *How Schools Kill Creativity*. (13:22).

<sup>8</sup> Robinson, *How to Escape Education's Death Valley*. (10:51).

The system of education functions fantastically for what it is designed to do. Robinson describes the cultural condition provoked the establishment of the system adopted and endlessly adapted for today. The mechanical metaphor is exhibitiv of the system's purpose. As it was conceived during the rational enlightenment era and for the purposes of the industrial revolution, it praises a particular form of intelligence, rejects the rest and handles those students by turning them into cogs for the bureaucratic and capitalistic engine of growth. Both orthodox philosophy and the contemporary culture of education are attempting to isolate the mind from the body, or rather, a certain type of intelligence from its source.

Dewey and Robinson share the concern for their respective culture's persisting teleological tendencies. Robinson believes policymakers think education is a machine to be finely tuned until it functions harmoniously. The contemporary culture of education, as described by Robinson, evokes a similarity to the faults Dewey found in traditional philosophy. The aesthetic qualities valued by the culture of education are similar to the principles cherished by orthodox philosophies. The orthodox philosophy integrates pre-Darwinian values as its aesthetic principles. The pre-Darwin culture influenced orthodox philosophy to hold ideals in concepts like telos, eidos, and species. The consequence of those terms is the strong belief in fixed and final cause, one that transcends this world.

The concept of telos comes from the Greco-Roman tradition of philosophy. It is utilized by Aristotle to indicate a final purpose or cause. The final purpose of a thing or being is fixed and absolute. However, this aesthetic preference is not necessary in reality.<sup>9</sup> It is an abstraction to conceptualize the relationship between form and function, design and purpose. Dewey, via natural selection à la Darwin, eliminates fixed ends and replaces them with ends-in-view. They possess the means for realization along with its conception. A Darwinian understanding of the

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<sup>9</sup> (MW.10.45)

world requires a rejection of telos, for it inhibits the freedom of the organism to adapt to its environment.

An a priori claim established before experience jeopardizes the fullness of the experience. A culture possessive of an a priori claim to the quality of experiences results in education considering all experiences to be of equal value. The apriorism of the necessity of the object and subject apparatus results in the epistemological belief that the subject does not interact with the object and consequently, we believe we ought not believe we can affect the object within the engaged activity. Similarly, the contemporary education culture attempts to ameliorate the situation but with notions of fixed and final causes imbued throughout. It entertains the notion of values such as conformity and compliance creating the best condition for growth. With the machine metaphor, it attempts to fine-tune the machine to teleological perfection. Telos is an aesthetic preference and therefore not necessary in experience. Accepting Robinson's claims as valid, he insists for instituting a new culture of education.



### **Research Question: How Do Humans Relate to Technology?**

In *John Dewey's Pragmatic Technology*, Hickman (1990) argues Dewey's philosophy is best understood as a philosophy of technology. Hickman's argument provides insights into the specialty of humans to not only utilize our intelligence but to alter our realities to a degree in which we are able to study and examine such ability. Hickman suggests the key to understanding Dewey's contribution to the philosophy of technology is his consideration for all inquiry involves tools or artifacts and are therefore instrumental, i.e., a form of technology.

Hickman's interpretation allows Dewey to be considered a critic of culture. Dewey is interested in the history of philosophy and as such, he is curious as to cultural contexts bringing to fruition the different instruments of inquiry. Dewey considers the functioning properties of philosophy to be characteristically similar to technology.<sup>10</sup> Philosophy is for the clarification of dynamics within its proper culture just as technology is for the control of the environment for the purposes of clearing the obstacles to inquiry. Dewey's theory of inquiry explains the necessary but continuous phases within the process. He finds inquiry to be crucial to human experience and any inquiry into human affairs must heed how the "methods and instruments of inquiry" affect the process.<sup>11</sup>

As Hickman elaborates, Dewey finds differing stages in the history of technology. The first being when objects are so functionally operative, there is little to no distinction between means and ends. The next is when the Greeks began to heavily abstract from experience and separated means from ends. The next is the revolution in scientific thought when means and ends are utilized to the extent of objects being considered instrumental to further inquiry.<sup>15</sup> Dewey asserts knowledge is derived from inquiry and therefore, it is artificial and for the purposes of

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<sup>10</sup> Hickman, *John Dewey's Pragmatic Technology*. (105).

<sup>11</sup> (LW.12.106)

<sup>15</sup> Hickman, *John Dewey's Pragmatic Technology*. (83)

furthering inquiry.

The mistake of orthodox philosophies is to consider knowledge to be structured before experience. Dewey's philosophy of technology exhibits his criticism of orthodox epistemologies and the theory of inquiry he offers in response to their deficiencies. He considers philosophy to have drifted from experience being the central emphasis and focal point. An indeterminate situation is provocative of questions; "or, in terms of actuality instead of potentiality, to be uncertain, unsettled, disturbed."<sup>16</sup> The orthodox philosophies rejection of the precarious corrupts inquiry into its preference for stability. It negates the necessity of the precarious as it constitutes the stable.

The ideas from Hickman's reappraisal of Dewey's philosophy as a technological critique reorients our investments for the future. Reformations to the education system can also be considered inquiries into the conditions necessary for the intended purposes of education. As a process of policy, it finds something in the system to be not functioning properly. The policies implemented adjust the conditions of education. The critique of the situation is recurrent, as it continues to pose questions and raise doubts for further inquiry. Inquiry into the conditions of education to reveal the regulative principles within is defunct if it prefers particular standards prior to inquiry.

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<sup>16</sup> (LW.12.109)

### Research Answer: Erōs and Technē as Instrumental for Inquiry

In *Dewey and Erōs*, Jim Garrison (1997) argues Dewey's philosophy of education cannot be fully appreciated without an understanding of his philosophy of love. If Garrison's argument is correct, then he provides a way of understanding Dewey's philosophy *as* education. Dewey's theories of experience, inquiry and aesthetics explain the purpose of life: to use the imagination to find solutions to current problems, and negotiating moral choices. Dewey recognizes that philosophy is a desire for wisdom, if it is understood as a value or an ideal to sustain in reality. His theory explains how life is philosophy, through the process of desiring wisdom in our everyday actions. We are aimed towards forming the biological individual to be better habituated but also to share such knowledge in a community at large. The commonality in Hickman and Garrison's interpretations is their elaboration on the dynamics within inquiry, especially in the discussion of desire or interests. If inquiry is control of the conditions of a situation, then both technē and erōs are responsible for part of the effort. Technē can be considered the organism's manipulation of the environment, while erōs can be considered the organism's self-control.

Plato and Aristotle consider technē to be any productive skill. Technē is a creative force, capable of brining possibilities to reality. It is believed to interact between the two extremes of nature and chance.<sup>17</sup> Garrison explains the connections between types of knowledge and their use in inquiry:

*Technē* for the ancient Greeks meant craft, skill, art; it is the knowledge of poesis, involving knowing how to create what the craftsman desires. By contrast, *theoria*, from which the word *theory* is derived, meant speculation, contemplation, or 'a spectator above.' Theoria assumes an attitude of detachment and distance from everyday life and practice. The form of knowledge associated with theoria was episteme, which meant certain knowledge of perfectly clear, immutable and timeless truths. Episteme opposes technē because technē is knowledge of how to do things in this vague, changeable, and ephemeral world. The Greeks put theoria and episteme at the

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<sup>17</sup> Hickman, *John Dewey's Pragmatic Technology*. (17).

top of the hierarchy of knowledge. Poiesis and technē were at the bottom. Nothing has changed over the millennia. Today educators research teaching as they should, but too much of it is done *on* teachers rather than *with* them. Theoreticians and technocrats sometimes assume their wisdom is at the top of the knowledge hierarchy and that of teachers at the bottom.<sup>18</sup>

Dewey considered technology to be both the productive skill in inquiry but also how new methods and models for inquiry are developed.<sup>19</sup> Technology is inclusive of both the theoretical and the practical means of inquiry. A characteristic of inquiry is its normativity. Inquiry discovers regulative principles as relevant to the conditions of such inquiry. Because the process of inquiry requires both physical instruments and mental concepts to transform the situation, Hickman believes Dewey's theory to suggest knowing as a technical artifact for inquiry. In this regard, experience is a necessary condition to the knowledge grasped from the situation.

For Dewey, ideals exist as constructs of our intellect and as tools for inquiry. The effectiveness of imagined ideals are present in inquiry yet they do not purport a transcendental influence. Desires and interests guide the selection and attendance of stimuli from the wash of experience affecting a human. If technē is the control of the external conditions to inquiry, then erōs is control of the internal, socio-biological conditions to inquiry. The dichotomy of erōs and technē is a useful abstraction for understanding the two mitigating forces within inquiry. The issue is when this distinction becomes given, or necessary, prior to experience.

Jim Garrison, in his monograph *Dewey and Erōs*, re-conceptualizes and presents Plato's account in the *Symposium* of a dialogue between Socrates and Diotima. He asserts the Greeks to describe the education of erōs as the method for teaching practical wisdom. Garrison presents this argument is to show how ancient Greek education can be modified for our modern democratic society; specifically the Greek sense of poetry reveals the aesthetic dimensions of

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<sup>18</sup> Garrison, *Dewey and Erōs*. (8-9)

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. (19).

teaching. He contends teaching should be the teaching of practical wisdom. Garrison believes practical reasoning (*phrōnesis*) facilitates ability in practical inquiry. There is no such intelligent reasoning in conflict with this practical reasoning.

Garrison's claims *erōs* to be the democratic principle central to the focus of our education reformations. Garrison considers *erōs* to be one of several *daimōns*, a reference to the intermediary dynamic between the possible and the actual. For Plato it is the between the world of the Forms and this one we inhabit. Dewey, being a naturalist, rejected the dualism of *erōs* as being transcendent of reality. However, *erōs* remains important for Dewey; "the naturalist converts the role of *daimōns* into means that transform the present needful, doubtful situation into the desired end, value, or ideal. Finding means to desirable ends is a matter of inquiry, imagination, and creativity. It also requires technique."<sup>21</sup>

Garrison discusses the functionality of *daimōns* as told by Diotima, the most important to his argument being *erōs*. He describes *erōs* as a formless and foolish energy and transacts with beauty within the imagination. Garrison notes the two possible kinds of fleeting immortality: biological procreation and cultural reproduction. The typical association with *erōs* is sexual, due to the human desire for immortality in this mortal realm. As he states, "Teaching is ... a crucial social function of cultural reproduction."<sup>22</sup> Therefore, education ought to teach citizens how to properly procreate democratic, social values. Garrison suggests an education of *erōs* can habituate "moral perception" within students.<sup>23</sup>

Garrison uses Dewey's pragmatism to critique and reconstruct Platonic *erōs*. Garrison speaks to the reason as to why Dewey thinks "dialogue across differences" is necessary for

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<sup>21</sup> Garrison, *Dewey and Erōs*. (22).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. (10).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. (19).

growth.<sup>25</sup> Conversations considering ideals contain a plurality of realities. Different ideals formed in separate lives obtain validation for but a moment. For in a dialogue, one offers their beliefs to be judged for their moral and logical justifications or evidence.

Garrison reads Dewey as believing in a rhythmic integration, disintegration, and reintegration occurring in all experience. The human organism is constantly in experience and can understand its existence as within a temporal flux. Dewey and Plato shared a similar belief in the beautiful and the harmonious being one in the same. Dewey rejects the existence of the perfect and transcendent Forms offered by Plato, and replaces them ends-in-view. “All experience, Dewey believed, displays the rhythm of integration, disintegration, and aesthetic reintegration.”<sup>26</sup> We control this process through practical wisdom regarding what is desirable and practical knowledge is creative in its process of actualizing the desirable.

From a Deweyan perspective, it is the cycle of growth. Unlike Hegel, for Dewey there is no perfection to be reached in this process. Rather, habits are developed, values are established, and cultures multiply. Each generation is responsible for the transmission of social knowledge to the next inhabitants of a society. The most precious value to be shared is wisdom. Garrison notes what Dewey finds in inquiry is a technology to bring the material pieces together of a situation to creative and new imagined situation. Dewey finds *technē* (and *poiesis*) in both science and art. Art is as technical as it is creative; scientists are as creative as they are technical. Education is tasked with reproducing a society’s culture and as such, is responsible for the capacities engendered in future, active citizens.

Garrison sees an intertwining and connection of new scholarships about Dewey’s work focusing on his aesthetics and its inclusion in bringing coherence to the entirety of Dewey’s

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<sup>25</sup> Garrison, *Dewey and Erōs*. (15).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* (16-17)

philosophical project. Garrison's scholarship within the discourse is intended to elucidate a greater understanding of teaching vocation through presenting *erōs* in education. Garrison sees himself as part of the trend of scholars making efforts to reconsider Dewey's system as explained by his theory of aesthetics. Educating *erōs* would allow students a clearer grasp of their unique abilities as organisms. According to Garrison, the purpose of educating *erōs* is to endow students with moral intelligence and practical wisdom. The education of *erōs* provides students with the *technē* to approach their problematic situations with a poetic eye towards resolving the situation.

The key to Garrison's reconsideration is the dynamism of *erōs* in experience, and more so, the power of emotion in inquiry. The passions of the individual affect the process of inquiry. The continuous cycle of emotive states of need, desire and satisfaction are influential on inquiry.<sup>28</sup> When doubt in a situation is raised, these attitudes become operative in inquiry to establish new habits of action. Dewey asserts, "Art ... recognizes what it has taken so long to discover in science; the control exercised by emotion in re-shaping natural conditions, and the place of the imagination, under the influence of desire, in re-creating the world into a more orderly place."<sup>29</sup> Accordingly, all inquiry is contingent upon how the organism intuits and accounts for the "non-cognitive qualities."<sup>30</sup> The force of emotion is currently neglected in the system of education.

One purpose of education is the development of proper habits in children. Dewey describes habits as an inclination to action. Dewey discusses routine habits as detrimental to the capacity of growth. They do not permit the freedom of intelligence provided by habits. They are what are considered a bad habit. "Routine habits, and habits that possess us instead of our possessing them, are habits which put an end to plasticity."<sup>31</sup> A habit indicates the organism's

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<sup>28</sup> Garrison, *Dewey and Erōs*. (99).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. (100).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. (101).

<sup>31</sup> (MW.9.54)

active awareness in a situation. Each habit is appropriate for a particular situation. “Modes of thought, of observation and reflection, enter as forms of skill and of desire into the habits that make a man an engineer, an architect, a physician or a merchant.”<sup>32</sup>

Since Hickman and Garrison are discussing different forms of control of the environment, on *technē* and on *erōs*, their critiques are in regards to Dewey’s belief in the value of plasticity. This claim is useful for considering what Dewey believes are the dangers looming in a culture of education so focused on the efficient at the loss of the plastic and the pliable. Dewey speaks to the “power of acquiring variable and novel modes of control”<sup>33</sup> when referring to the result of a prolongation of plasticity. He believes an increasingly complex social life might benefit from such focus on plasticity, as he described the effect of the disparity between adults and youth, in terms of how the efficient adults decide for the youth and the conditions of their growth.

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<sup>32</sup> (MW.9.53)

<sup>33</sup> (MW.9.50)



### **Practical Solution: Education of Erōs for Flourishing Democratic Lifestyle**

In “The Promise of Democracy and Edward Saïd’s Politics of Worldliness: Implications for Academics as Public Intellectuals,” Henry Giroux speaks to the decline in available public spheres. In it, he notes Dewey’s call for education to create a public of informed citizens.<sup>34</sup> He wants to revitalize the university as the bastion for conversation relevant to the social values of people. He sees the university as technical training, an investment in one’s future, as the job marketability of an education becomes the center of attention. He believes the capitalist market values replace the social values we need in the political sphere. Once citizens were engaged in the public discourse in their society. Giroux considers conformity to the market values to be the criteria for citizenship today. He thinks the suffering of individuals remains a private matter and there is no public discourse for how to resolve these personal issues.

The problem Henry Giroux puts forth is a moral one. Giroux sees our conformity to market values as the new form of citizenship. The contemporary education system is amazingly effective at its purpose of transmitting these cultural values to students. However, instead of engendering the capacity to seek the good in one’s action, as the Greeks saw fit, education churns out students with capitalistic market values. Individuals with hindering distinctions are not acting with complete freedom of choice. The power relations are insurmountable. Giroux sees Edward Saïd as one of the most prolific scholars to establish what a public intellectual ought to be modeled. Giroux notes a passage from Saïd’s biography, where he describes his relationship with wakefulness.<sup>35</sup> This is used as a metaphor for how we need to be engaged with the world. Saïd possesses merit for Giroux because he contends the dominant power structure. If the media and the universities attempt to maintain the conservative ideology transmitted across

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<sup>34</sup> Giroux, “The Promise of Democracy and Edward Saïd’s Politics of Worldliness: Implications for Academics as Public Intellectuals.” (301).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. (304).

all forms of communication, then Saïd is a model intellectual for consistently challenging those norms.

For Dewey, growth is the attainment of better conditions for further flourishing, for the increase in the self-identification with actions. As the individual grows on a microscopic level, so too does the society grow on a macroscopic level. To this point, the traditional capitalistic market values are not what are reflected in the actions of this new individual. Rather, this person acts as one being because of the recognition of its role in the social construction of all intelligence. Certainly there are contributions to this wealth of knowledge through traditionally what would be deemed rational methods; yet, the system ignores the multitude of possible intelligence in reality. Democracy as a way of life means a bounty of goods for one and for all. Consequently, a society needs citizens with the habits of character of someone whom hopes to find solutions through democratic means and as such, requires people to act accordingly to the self they have created. Otherwise, those that hope to contribute to a solution cannot entertain the possibility of some other's ideas or issues.

Because of the power of *erōs*, the self becomes an instrument for inquiry, in accordance to a self that one creates, through actions. Dewey's faith in human intelligence is to be realized for one and for all, because such a society would contain persons aiming for the good in their actions. For Dewey, intelligence is where freedom is derived, being why deliberate choices are so crucial, for they should be intended to achieve more conditions for flourishing. Our capacity to interact with intelligence to each problematic situation, every inquiry, is Dewey's strongest faith. "Faith in the power of intelligence to imagine a future which is the projection of the desirable in the present, and to invent the instrumentalities of its realization, is our salvation."<sup>36</sup>

There is a unity of self and actions, as well as cohesion between ethics, epistemology and

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<sup>36</sup> (MW.10.48)

aesthetics. Dewey is concerned with any ethics and any epistemology proclaiming certain *a priori* principles to attain before experience. A resurgence of Platonic *erōs* would consist in the return to education as moral artistry. Not until Plato's *Symposium* did the concept of *erōs* connote epistemological and ethical aspects.<sup>37</sup> Every experience is novel in the sense it is ripe as its own moment and contains an element of necessity. Dewey, as a philosopher of novelty, considers every instrument to inquiry novel, as well as every result of inquiry.

The schoolhouse is the location within each community where culture is transmitted to the younger generations. The education system can be examined for its imposition of values with the mechanical model of education. Because of this model, students are increasingly disinterested in their educations because they are not educating *erōs*. *Erōs* is a passionate and creative energy, focusing our desires into aims. With *erōs*, we become what we love, because our desires and interests affect our inquiries into every moment of experience, and further, into the aims and purposes of our ideals. The obstacles block inquiry into understanding how one's interests and desires affect every moment of inquiry and consequentially, the solutions for problems as conditioned by society. Each inquiry is contextual to its surrounding conditions and therefore the organism as it transacts with conditions must take notice to the internal conditions of the inquirer affecting the experience. The purpose of democracy is to facilitate the conditions necessary for more democratic opportunities. The art of moral deliberation to imagine the good as contextual to every situation and as imagining possibilities, its process of "evaluation is the essential step in applying intelligence to the pursuit of the common good".<sup>38</sup>

In several pieces throughout his writing career, Dewey mentions empty castles in the sky. They are his metaphor for ideals envisioned without means for their realization. Ideals do exist,

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<sup>37</sup> Hickman and Spadafora, *John Dewey's Educational Philosophy in International Perspective*. (28).

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* (19).

in this world, as constructions of our imagination. They are instruments to our resolution of particular and pressing situations. They act as the end-in-view within a task. This blending of the aim of inquiry and the affective desires are what we consider its purpose. The organism must select and attend to particular interests as deemed appropriate from one's desire in the action. The ideas for a revolution of a system we see unwise and unfit, are nothing but empty castles without a creative inquiry into the necessary and sufficient conditions for growth. There is no inquiry into the means to foresee the realization of the castle. The inquiry for conceiving of such castles is not habituated to utilize both *erōs* and *technē* in the formation of ideal solutions.

The system of education within every society is responsible for the transmission of cultural heritage from one generation to the next. These values are constructed by the community in contextual transactions and then considered useful enough to be of worth to future generations. A consequence of maintaining a certain cultural value beyond its potency is the appropriation of such an instrument to a situation that is foreign to the efficacy of the value. The aesthetic preference for efficiency over plasticity played a role in the development of the education system of today.

An unfaltering belief in the stability of a developed model causes further inquiry with the model to tend more and more towards the assumption of its stability. The issue is the lack of attention to the non-cognitive, qualitative aspects of inquiry as we alter current conditions of education for the students' futures. The non-cognitive qualities to inquiry are not instrumental, but we can use our inquiry to determine how they affect the cognitive conditions of inquiry. Dewey finds the purpose of education to be the development of the power of self-control within the precarious and doubtful aspects of experience, as well as the stable and certain.

Our obstacles to inquiry do not permit the power of *erōs* to flourish, because of those

impositions are to a standard of efficiency and consequently squandering plasticity. Technē becomes the dominant force in inquiry and our solutions became distant from the public's concerns. Some obstacles to inquiry include false dichotomies or aesthetic preferences. Dualisms such as mind and body become obstacles once they are considered necessary to experience and therefore instrumental in inquiry. Our education culture is so technological because of the elimination of qualitative assessment with a preference for relations between objects. The benefits of plasticity cannot be realized in a culture with aesthetic preferences for efficiency. Education reformation along the culture of efficiency can never provide the proper conditions for flourishing growth, because the highly technical and efficient model never knows when to quit.

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